

Rocky Withdrawal

104.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Statement By
Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller

I have decided today to reiterate unequivocally that I am not a candidate campaigning, directly or indirectly, for the Presidency of the United States.

There arises for me a political and a personal obligation to explain briefly the reasons for my decision. I can best state these reasons as answers to three obvious and fair questions.

One: why have I delayed this particular statement till this moment? Two: what are the essential causes for my decision? And three: what political course do I intend to pursue in the months ahead?

As for the first question....

I have had to weigh my decision, gravely and thoughtfully, because of the very nature of the Presidency and the very force of the appeals made to me to seek it. I believe I well understand the office of the Presidency and its unique place in our life as a people. No political leader in our national life should dread

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or shun it. No such leader should be too proud -- or too fearful of personal risk or sacrifice -- to seek it. Its burdens, huge though they are, do not awe me -- only its honor.

At the same time, I have spent the last weeks talking with concerned citizens and Republican officials, from coast to coast, who have urged me to wage the most vigorous contest to win this office. I have also been deeply moved by the activity of volunteer groups throughout the country, as well as the Republican workers in Oregon who amassed more than 50,000 signatures on their petitions to me. And so I might have shown less than enough respect for the honor of the Presidency, as well as for the counsel of many citizens, had I not weighed the matter with all mind and all conscience, before reaching a firm decision.

As for the second question -- the reasons for this decision -- I would summarize them as follows

One. By the nature of our political processes, we must operate through, not outside, our great political parties. Ideally, the Presidential candidate of each of our two major parties should reflect as broadly as possible the will and the spirit of each party and its leadership across the country. By this criterion, I could not truthfully claim such a Republican following today.

